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Spandau Maneuvers

2. On or about 1 Sep 51, the 590th L Arty Regt moved by its organic transportation from Oranienburg (5245N-1314E) to a point 5-10 km east of Spandau (5213N-1324E), where it conducted a field problem. The regiment left Oranienburg at 1900 hours, and arrived at its destination in two hours with no delays. Vehicles travelled at 60 km per hour. An infantry and a tank regiment [division subordinations unknown] stationed near Potsdam (5224N-1304E), participated in the problem. No other troops or units, such as engineer, signal, air force, etc, took part in the exercise.
3. No general officers were present during the field problem.
4. The problem lasted six days. The troops slept for five nights; but once, together with tanks and infantry, they conducted their problems at night. They selected and set up firing points, moving the artillery cross-country and through woods in the dark without any lights. The prime movers travelled at a very low rate of speed (approximately 20 Km ph) at an interval of 30 meters. Toward dawn, camouflage entrenchment was carried out. No aiming or firing was attempted during the night. To the best of my knowledge, there were no accidents during the exercise.

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5. Each battery was given two radio receiver-transmitters for use during the maneuver. [redacted] the radios were a new, secret type, manufactured in the year 1950. They were 15 x 15 x 10 inches in size, with a key for Morse code and a telephone receiver. The Battery CO talked through the radiophone to the observers or higher headquarters at a distance of 10 or more km. [redacted] the longer the antenna, the better the range. Communications nets were set up between regimental and battalion COs, between battalion and battery COs, and between battery COs and observers. [redacted]

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6. [redacted]

The men practiced selecting firing points, camouflaging, entrenching, sighting and aiming. There were no umpires and no critique. Before returning to Oranienburg on 6 Sep 51, the regimental CO told all officers and EM of the 590th L Arty Regt that they had conducted themselves well and were efficient during the problem, but that the gun positions, which had been placed at intervals of 20 meters, should have been spread out more.

7. [redacted]

T-34/85 tanks and JSU-152s. All crews of the 24 guns of the artillery regiment were in the Spandau area; I cannot name the number of personnel left behind in Oranienburg. There was an artillery division /A/17 stationed permanently near Spandau whose facilities the visiting units utilized. No foot marches were undertaken by the 590th L Arty Regt, but the infantry regt marched to the point 5-10 km east of Spandau on foot. No vehicle repair shop was present during the problem; however, the ration supply and medical aid station of the 590th L Arty Regt were there. The field kitchen moved with us and meals were brought to the troops, who ate them from mess kits.

8. [redacted]

9. Four batteries (one each from the 65th Gds HT-SP Regt, 17th Gds Tk Regt, 47th Gds Tk Regt and 50th Gds Tk Regt) stationed in Neustrelitz and each utilizing four 57-mm AT guns, plus a six-gun battery of 57-mm AT guns (subordinated directly to the Second Gds Mecz Army) stationed in Strelitz (5320N-1306E), went to Pasewalk by a special train of approximately 20 cars. Only ammunition (240 rounds per gun) was taken along. Medical services and food were supplied by the 33d Gds Mtz Rifle Regt.

10. Approximately 40 men from each battery boarded a freight (cattle) car. Each platform car had two 57-mm AT guns with two men on constant alert duty. One platform car held two trucks (prime movers or supply). The trip lasted one day, and no accidents occurred during the move. When the five batteries reached Pasewalk they set up their firing points in fields and forests approximately 2 km from the barracks of the 33d Gds Mtz Rifle Regt. [redacted]

[redacted] it was off limits to all Germans.

11. Two wooden tanks were set up, drawn by ropes in different directions at a speed of 30 km ph, and all batteries practiced small bore (subcaliber) firing at a distance of 300-500 m. Subcaliber firing was carried out by attaching a carbine to the top of a 57-mm AT gun. The gun was brought to bear on a target, with the sights of the carbine also aligned on the same target. The firing was done with the carbine in order to save ammunition. [redacted]

Scores for

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marksmanship were as follows: excellent - a disabling hit on both tanks; good - a disabling hit on one tank and any hit on second tank; satisfactory - any hits on either tank.

12. On or about 15 Jul 51 the units returned by train from Pasewalk to Neustrelitz and Strelitz, respectively. The trip took one day and was without accidents.

Lukenwalde Maneuver

13. Around 26 Jul 51 all artillery units of the 9th Gds Tk Div, consisting of 6/17 Mort Regt, 10/17 Rkt Launcher Bn, AT batteries of Tk Regts, 495th Sep How Bn and AAA batteries, travelled by train to Luckenwalde (5151N-1343E) for practice firing. The 65th Gds HT-SP Regt had one battery present of four 57-mm AT guns, approximately 4 officers and 25 EM. The move lasted two days and was free of accidents.

14. The target range in Luckenwalde was approximately 70 x 20 km in area. All units enumerated above fired at the same time. they had travelled about two hours by truck to reach the end of the range, the officers had informed them that the range (former German artillery) was immense (70 x 20 km). All units slept in tents and were fed by mobile kitchens. Movies were shown each night, but no bathing facilities were available.

15. There was no set daily training schedule since the units were on the range for only six days and fired during the morning or afternoon, with no night firing. When the EM were not firing they had no scheduled program but were permitted to engage in athletic games, listen to political lectures and rest.

16. six special training shells (all armor-piercing tracers) which contained less powder than regular shells and necessitated special firing charts, and once with four such shells. My gun fired at a distance of 300-500 m at wooden tanks towed by ropes from two different directions at a speed of 30 km ph. An excellent marksmanship score is to inflict four or six disabling hits (in turret or engine) on two tanks; a good score, a disabling hit on one tank and any hit on the second; a satisfactory score, any hit on each tank. On an average, AT marksmanship was good.

17. In July 1951 a battery of 100-mm guns /not from the 2d L Arty Brig or 9th Gds Tk Div and Source does not know the subordination or home station/ fired in Luckenwalde with an unknown type of shells. One shell fell 12 km away from the target in an unknown German village and burned down a house. After that incident GOFG prohibited the firing of 100-mm guns, claiming that they were inaccurate. All 100-mm gun batteries of the 2d L Arty Brig, which were in Luckenwalde for target practice at that time, stopped firing and returned to their home stations with the unused ammunition.

- 18.

Daily Training Schedule

19. The daily training schedule in the 65th Gds HT-SP Regt and 590th L Arty Regt, was as follows:

0600-0605 reveille
0605-0620 physical training
0620-0635 morning toilet
0635-0655 morning inspection

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0655-0900 political lectures and debates. /Debates consisted of questions by the lecturer, which the EM had to answer to prove that they had listened to the lecture, and were on the "History of the Communist Party, Glory of the Soviet Army, Life of Stalin, Kolkhoz Methods in the USSR, Development in Industry in the USSR, US War Aims, etc."/

0900-0930 breakfast

0930-1330 practice in sighting and aiming, nomenclature, field stripping, selection of gun positions, or camouflage and tactics /arbitrary with battery CO

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1330-1430 obstacle course, gymnastics

1430-1530 close order drill (on occasion CW or medical lectures)

1530-1600 rest period

1600-1630 dinner

1630-1800 rest period

1800-1900 cleaning of weapons

1900-2100 group political discussions

2100-2130 supper

2130-2230 free time

2230-2300 evening inspection

2300 taps

20. The political lectures, debates and indoctrination were given by the political officer. Close order drill, chemical and medical lectures were conducted by the NCOs and the rest of the training, by the platoon leader (lieutenant). Battery firing was under the supervision of the battery CO.

21. In August 1951 a commission from Moscow [] the team came from the Ministry of Defense/ inspected all training phases in the 2d L Arty Brig. The commission had a brigadier general (gen-maior) as chairman and a staff of colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors. [] a new inspection was to be made on 15 Sep 51. [] The commission was very emphatic on insufficient political indoctrination and also on the fact that the EM did not have sufficient training in firing. The political deficiency was stressed much more than the lack of firing training. Another defect noted by the commission was insufficient physical training. The commission ordered the CO of the 2d L Arty Brig to increase political indoctrination, conduct more CW defense lectures, teach EM to swim, and schedule more hikes, athletics, rope climbing and obstacle course training.

Tank-Infantry Coordination

22. [] infantry never attacks alone but must always coordinate with artillery and tanks /see Spandau Maneuvers, para. 27/. 57-mm and 76-mm guns used for AT and field artillery move along with the infantry in such a manner that they cover terrain favorable for tank passage. Tanks also go along with the infantry, and five or six infantry soldiers, in addition to the regular crew

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inside, ride atop the tanks and jump off on command of infantry NCOs for hand to hand fighting. These men are called "Desanty" (tankborne). Heavy artillery is usually two to five km behind the infantry, moving along as necessity dictates.

23. [redacted] detailed information on tank-infantry coordination (day or night):

(a) In an attack on a position of the field fortification type, several tank regiments may support an infantry regiment, depending on the combat situation. One infantry battalion may at times require the support of a tank regiment or more. A tank regiment has approximately 50 tanks. Normally though, one tank battalion supports an infantry regiment. Three or four tanks, or one tank company, may ordinarily be assigned to support a battalion. Tank units support the infantry; they are not attached to it. Tank units and infantry as a rule fight together.

(b) Whether tanks are on the line of departure before the infantry jumps off depends on the situation at a given time. The normal procedure is as follows: first, heavy artillery pounds the enemy; then come heavy and medium tanks with as many soldiers (desanty) as can find sitting room on the tanks; then follows the rest of the infantry.

(c) [redacted] The main principle is that the tank units and infantry are guided by the situation on the battle field. However, the infantry almost always stays close to the tanks.

(d) Large mobile tank units can be committed both to enlarge a breakthrough and for exploitation purposes of the break-through. It all depends on the situation.

Battle Order

24. The forces available are arrayed in depth. Infantry may be in three echelons: the tanks move with the infantry regiment of the first echelon; the second infantry regiment follows with tanks (the infantry sitting on the tanks), and if the battle situation warrants it, the third infantry echelon, supported by tanks, moves as rapidly as it can in the best possible manner. As the forces progress, communication by telephone, radio and telegraph is maintained. The tanks have two-way radios installed in them. All Soviet tanks [redacted] namely JS-1, JS-2 and T-34, were equipped with radios. [redacted] during the war some tanks would drop into a ditch to be used as a bridge for other tanks to cross over.

New Weapons

25. [redacted] the USSR has a new secret tank, either T-54 or Z-54, which is supposed to be equipped with special optical sights and a gyro-stabilized gun. This new tank attains a speed of 80 km an hour.

26. [redacted] the new gun [redacted] has a spring recoil and a shorter recoil in contrast to the 80 cm [redacted]

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recoil of the 1943 model. [redacted]

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[redacted] there were new 85-mm guns which were scheduled to replace the 76-mm guns [redacted] 85-mm and 76-mm field guns were also used as AT guns.

Training

27. The brigade senior artillery officer gave all battery and platoon officers daily lessons in artillery tactics. There were no leadership courses for officers or NCOs after graduation. Students of the NCO school took turns as instructors.

28. The only chemical warfare training [redacted] was defensive, and not extensive. This consisted of donning a gas mask and identification of gases

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29. [redacted] All units of the 9th Gds Tk Div had one week of night training. The artillery units practiced moving up to enemy lines with blacked-out headlights (covering the headlights with canvas or paper, exposing only a tiny ray of light or no light at all), selecting and occupying firing points, entrenchment, camouflaging, and sighting and aiming on direct targets. The latter phase was accomplished by attaching a 12-volt electric light bulb to the sights of the gun. The targets were lighted up by setting fire to the bushes nearby. [redacted] actual warfare searchlights would be turned on targets where-
ever possible. [redacted]

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30. Camouflage training was practiced by gun crews of artillery units - not by engineers. Considerable practical training in camouflaging artillery firing positions and guns was given to all artillery EM. The method used was to cover the guns and firing points with earth, grass, twigs, rocks, nets, etc. Camouflage nets were made of gray-green corded cotton [redacted] in WW II paint was used for camouflage tactics.

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31. Soviet soldiers receive three days rations in combat, with additional food brought to them by mobile field kitchens. They are not permitted to leave their units for foraging and are not trained "to live off the country."

32. [redacted] three to six months are required for training a battery for combat readiness.

33. The average Soviet soldier fires only the weapon he uses - approximately 30 rounds from a carbine or SMG. However, NCOs receive additional fire training. [redacted]

34. [redacted] Soviet troops identify their front line units by flares and/or hand flag signals (semaphores).

35. The 9th Gds Tk Div had 5-6 alerts during the year. These alerts comprised training for attack and defense. The 9th Gds Tk Div was required to be in an assembly area within two hours after the alert was given, together with all equipment, supplies, and repair shops, leaving behind only an unknown number of security guards. [redacted] on an alert once [redacted] the students were awakened at night, placed in trucks and moved to an assembly area.

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36. Soviet troops are told that the USA and UK are preparing to attack the USSR and that they must be ready to defend it. When a US plane was shot down over the Baltic Sea [redacted] all Soviet troops in the Sov Zone of Germany were alerted to be ready for USA attacks.

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